GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4564
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2008
MALNUTRITION
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Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that India have the largest number of children suffering from malnutrition in compare to other countries of the world;

(b) if so, the reaction of the government thereto; and

(c) the number of children suffering from malnutrition, State-wise?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY)

(a) As per the UNICEF report titled "Progress For Children", published in May, 2006, out of 146 million underweight children, under age five years living in developing World, 57 million live in India.

(b) Malnutrition is a multi-faceted problem which requires a series of actions in the area of food security, safe drinking water, sanitation, health care, family welfare, nutrition and poverty alleviation.
The Government of India is implementing the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme with the following objectives:

to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years;

to lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child;

to reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout;

to achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and

to enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education.
It provides integrated services comprising:
i. supplementary nutrition

ii. immunization,

iii. health check-up,

iv. referral services,

v. pre-school non-formal education and

vi. nutrition & health education.

The steps taken in the recent past to increase the effectiveness of the delivery of services under ICDS include:

The scheme has been expanded twice in the year 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 during the Tenth Five Year Plan.

The Government has doubled the financial norms for supplementary nutrition from Re.1 to Rs.2/- per beneficiary per day.

From the year 2005-06, 50% cost of supplementary nutrition is also being shared with the States/UTs.

Constant emphasis on States to:

Ensure regular supply of supplementary nutrition as per schematic norms:

Ensure effective convergence of health, nutrition, education and safe drinking water services under various programmes.

Nutrition Awareness Campaign

(c) The State-wise percentage of underweight children, under age five year is annexed.